

REMARKS

Re-examination and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed August 25, 2004, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), but indicates that dependent claims 2, 4 and 6 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if they are amended to include the limitations of their respective base claims.

By the current amendment, Applicants cancel, without prejudice, claims 1, 3 and 5, and amend claims 2, 4 and 6 to place them into independent form, including substantially all the limitations of their respective base claim. In view of the current amendment, Applicants submit that claims 2, 4 and 6 have been placed in condition for allowance, and respectfully request such an indication from the Examiner.

Further, cancellation of claims 1, 3 and 5 should not be taken as an acquiescence of the appropriateness of the rejection, but as a desire to advance the prosecution of the application and obtain allowance of the objected claims. In this regard, Applicants expressly reserve the right to submit similar type claims in another application.

In view of the current action taken in this application, Applicants submit that it is no longer necessary to discuss the claim rejections and applied references.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the fact that none of the art of record, whether considered alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the present invention as now defined by the pending

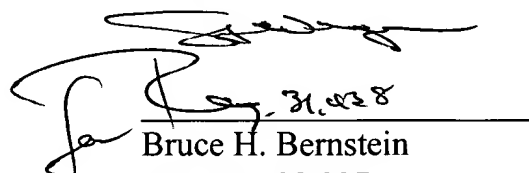
claims, and in further view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the Examiner's action and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

If there should be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
Shigeru WAKASHIRO


Reg. No. 29,027
Bruce H. Bernstein

November 12, 2004
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191